

Department of Vermont Health Access

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I am very pleased to announce that Richard Slusky, CEO of Mt. Ascutney Hospital and Health Center in Windsor, VT, has accepted the position of Payment Reform Director in the Health Care Reform Division of the Department of Vermont Health Access.

The Payment Reform Director position was created in Act 128 of 2010 to develop and test new payment methodologies (such as payment bundling, capitated rates, pay-for-performance, and new rate setting approaches) to be used jointly by Vermont's public and private insurance carriers in order to manage the total costs of the health care delivery system at a regional level, improve the health care quality for Vermonters, and help bend the curve on the growth in health care costs within our state. The Payment Reform Director will analyze the feasibility and advisability of these various approaches within the Vermont health care context, and work with the necessary stakeholders to make them a reality.

Given the responsibility and complexity of this role, the Payment Reform Director must be someone who understands the Vermont health care system, understands payment methodologies at the practical level, has a firm grasp of service delivery dynamics across all provider types, and understands the complexities of health care reform. Richard has all these qualities.

In September, Richard is retiring from his position as CEO of Mt. Ascutney Hospital and Health Center, a position he has held since 1982. Mt. Ascutney Hospital is a Critical Access Hospital, which is licensed for 60 beds—35 acute care beds, including a 10-bed distinct-part rehabilitation unit and a 25-bed nursing facility. In this CEO role, Richard has a working knowledge of the payment methodologies used by all Vermont insurers, as well as the incentives and disincentives they create for improving quality and controlling health care costs. He also has been a leader among his peers at the national and state level, serving as Chair of the American Hospital Association Governing Council, Section for Small or Rural Hospitals; a member of the American Hospital Association Governing Council, Section for Rehabilitation Hospitals; and a member and past Chairman of the Vermont Association of Hospitals and Health Systems (VAHHS). He was also Chair of the Stockfarm Group, a VAHHS Committee which addressed a number of Health Care Reform issues, and is currently Chair of the Reform Readiness Group, a committee sponsored by VAHSS including hospitals, physicians, community health centers, long-term care and home health organizations and their Associations that is working to better coordinate efforts to plan for the changing health care environment. Richard has an MBA in Health Care Administration from Boston University Graduate School of Management.

Richard will begin in his new role as Payment Reform Director on September 12, 2010.

Susan

Susan W. Besio, Ph.D.

Commissioner

Department of Vermont Health Access

Vermont Health Care Reform